

SOONER MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED EVERY MONTH BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION

ROSCOE CATE, '26, Editor-Manager

EDITH WALKER, *Managing Editor* ELAINE LARECY, *Assistant Editor* TED BEAIRD, *Riding the Range* HAROLD KEITH, *Sooner Sports*

VOL. XV

APRIL, 1943

NO. 8

Oklahoma's Future

The State Legislature in March was working out plans to set up a state planning and resources office with a full time director. This program, if sufficiently co-ordinated with professionally trained scientists at the state's institutions of higher education, can be of great value to the state.

Both the University and A. and M. College have men on their staffs who have collected a considerable amount of information and scientific data about Oklahoma's undeveloped resources, both mineral and biological. But these men, who necessarily are scientists and professional workers, lack the political know-how to secure the public support necessary to put their information and suggestions into practical use.

There is a great opportunity for a state official with headquarters in the capitol and with good working connections with all the leaders of the state government to see to it that means are provided for getting some action on various development programs that might be started on a basis of information already available.

The Oklahoma Geological Survey has accumulated a large amount of data on Oklahoma's mineral resources other than oil and gas, and some of this information points out the directions to be taken in trying to develop new industries for Oklahoma—something that will be absolutely vital as soon as the war stops and Oklahoma's war "boom" is deflated.

Development of an industry depends not only upon the presence of a single raw material, but also on the presence of sufficient water and power and other items needed for operation, as well as a reasonably close market and equitable freight rates.

The Geological Survey has anticipated this problem and is prepared to deal with it effectively as it applies to any proposed new industry. The Bureau of Business Research at the University has studied the problem of markets and freight rates and distribution and can furnish information along this line for a prospective new industry.

Zoologists and botanists at state institutions have collected an array of data on Oklahoma's biological resources—particularly plants and fish. There are a great many native plants already known which appear suitable for development either for food purposes during the war emergency, or for various industrial uses. The growing of fish in farm ponds and lakes in Oklahoma is a scientific problem which has been studied, and there is information available which would give farmers an important new source of food.

Understanding Needed

The University of Oklahoma is undergoing some drastic changes, and there possibly was never a time when the institution was so badly in need of a sympathetic understanding of its problems by alumni.

The State Legislature decided that the state appropriation should be reduced because of lower enrolment. Revolving fund revenue has greatly declined because of lower enrolment. At the same time it became necessary to go on a full 12-months basis to meet the demands of the war training programs. Because the University faculty is now on a 9-months basis instead of a 12-months basis, it is necessary to spread the reduced state appropriation very thinly in order to maintain a year-round program.

The Legislature and the State Regents for Higher Education anticipated that the University would get large federal payments for the college war training program, but this program is materializing very slowly in spite of every effort on the part of the University to bring training units to Norman as soon as possible.

It all adds up to a severe headache for the administrative officers who have to figure how to meet the rapidly multiplying problems.

Alumni—although all busy with the multitude of war demands upon their time and energy—might well devote a little time to study of the University's problems. The future demands upon the University of Oklahoma for educational service are certain to be great, and no alumnus wants to see the institution unprepared for the services expected of it.

The Cover

President Roosevelt presents the Congressional Medal of Honor to Maj. John L. Smith, '36bus, Lexington, with the assistance of the hero Marine pilot's wife.

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Sooner Magazine is published the fifth day of each month by the University of Oklahoma Association, Union Building, Norman, Okla. Entered as second class matter Oct. 13, 1928, at the post office at Norman, Okla., under the Act of Cong. of March 3, 1879. Subscription \$3.00 per year, of which \$2.00 is for the Magazine and \$1.00 for Alumni Dues. Foreign, \$4.00. Life, \$60.00. Single copies 25 cents. Opinions expressed are those of the editor and do not necessarily represent official action of the Alumni Executive Board. Member of American Alumni Council. National Advertising Representative: The Graduate Group, Inc., 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City.